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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/060,776	02/01/2002	Chih-Chen Chang	13867 B	8215

7590 04/24/2007
HART, BAXLEY, DANIELS & HOLTON
Third Floor
90 John Street
New York, NY 10038

EXAMINER

PAYNE, SHARON E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2875

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	04/24/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/060,776

Applicant(s)

CHANG, CHIH-CHEN

Examiner

Sharon E. Payne

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 January 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

The indicated allowability of original claim 8 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to a holder for a Christmas tree lamp. Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow. The Examiner regrets the inconvenience this action has caused.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hellrich (U.S. Patent 3,118,617) in view of Cooper (U.S. Patent 5,697,591).

Regarding claim 1, Hellrich discloses strings of decorating lamps (Fig. 6), branches, and a trunk (Fig. 1), the branches being arranged and located around the trunk (Fig. 1), the strings of decorating lamps being located on the branches (Fig. 1), the cord of the string of decorating lamps having more than one palm-shaped branch which coordinate to the tree branch in shape (Fig. 1), at a tip end

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a bulb (reference number 3) is built on and connected in electric connection (Fig. 1), and cords corresponding to the core shaft of the branch are hidden by binding the clusters of needle-shaped leaves on the core shaft with a binding belt (Fig. 4). Hellrich does not disclose a lamp-holder holding the bulb having a retainer for fastening on the tip end of the cluster of the needle-shaped leaves.

Cooper discloses a lamp-holder holding the bulb having a retainer (reference number 34) for fastening on the tip end of the cluster of the needle-shaped leaves (Fig. 1, see horizontal portion).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the configuration of Cooper in the apparatus of Hellrich to attach the lamp to a structure. See Fig. 1 of Cooper.

Concerning claim 2, Hellrich and Cooper do not specifically disclose a plug and socket, but Hellrich suggests them in Fig. 6.

Using a plug and a socket to make an electrical connection is considered to be an obvious variation. Since the plug and socket are well known in the art, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the plug and socket to make the electrical connections delineated in Fig. 6 of Hellrich.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to put a plug and socket on the Hellrich apparatus to establish an electrical connection as disclosed in Fig. 6.

Regarding claim 3, Hellrich discloses the palm-shaped branches of the string of decorating lamps being arranged in horizontal array around the trunk (Fig. 1), and in stepped construction from the bottom to the top circularly and upward (Fig. 1), and one terminal is connected to the power source (Fig. 6).

Concerning claim 4, Hellrich discloses the palm-shaped branches of the string of decorating lamps being arranged in horizontal array around the trunk (Fig. 1) and in stepped construction from the top to the bottom circularly and downward (Fig. 1) with one terminal connected to the power source (Fig. 6). (One can start at either the top or the bottom of the tree to define the array in the Hellrich reference.)

Regarding claim 5, Hellrich discloses the palm-shaped branches of the string of decorating lamps being arranged in vertical array along the trunk (Fig. 1), each one of the lamps is retained on a different level but the same orientation on the branches (Fig. 1) with one terminal connected to the power source (Fig. 6). (One can define the array in the Hellrich reference in a horizontal or vertical manner.)

Concerning claim 6, as best understood, Hellrich discloses a string of Christmas tree lights wherein, in the connection of the palm-shaped branches and the branch of the tree, all or part of the palm-shaped branches of the strings of decorating lamps in the same branch consist of a local connection unit (Fig. 6).

Regarding claim 7, as best understood, Hellrich discloses a string of Christmas tree lights wherein, in the connection of the palm-shaped branches and the branch of the tree, all or part of the palm-shaped branches of the strings of decorating lamps in the same branch consist of a local connection unit (Fig. 6).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-7 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The arguments concerning the objections and drawing objections are accepted.

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sharon E. Payne whose telephone number is (703) 308-2125. The examiner can normally be reached on regular business hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sandra O'Shea can be reached on (703) 305-4939. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9318 for regular communications and (703) 872-9319 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

Sep
April 20, 2007


Sharon Payne
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800